

Oct 15th 1851

To Conantion - at twilight. The moon not quite half full.

The twilight is much shorter than a month ago, probably because the atmosphere is clearer and there is less to reflect the light.

The air is cool & the ground also feels cold under my feet as if the grass were wet with dew, which is not yet the case.

I go through Wheeler's cornfield on the brook, in the twilight, where the stalks are bleached almost white and the tops are still stacked along the edge of the field. The moon is not far up above the S. W. horizon.

Looking west at this hour, the earth is an unvaried undistinguishable black in contrast with the twilight sky. It is as if you were walking in night up to your chin. When the twilight is over you will see objects on the earth's surface more distinctly. A neighbor tells me that he observed some when he met the

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other evening that he could not
see because it was not dark enough -
which his 'companion' thought was
merely an odd expression. But
it is even so. When there is less
light in the sky you will see
better on earth.

There is no wind stirring. An
oak tree in 'outwards' posture
stands absolutely motionless &
dark against the sky.

The crickets sound further
off or fainter at this season
as if they had gone deeper into
the sod to avoid the cold.

There are no crickets heard on
the alders, on the causeway. The
moon looks colder in the water -
though the water insects are still
active.

There has been a great change
between that crystal moonlight
walk. I experience a comfortable
warmth when I approach the
south side of a dry wood, which
keeps off the cooler air & also
retains some of the warmth of
day. The suns are brighter

than before.

I hear the voices of travellers on the road
far over the fields from the Comantun
house.

The moon is too far west to
be seen reflected in the river at
Bittern Cliff - but the stars are
reflected. The river is a dark mirror
with bright points feebly fluctuating.
I smell the crushed horseminth
which I cannot see while I
sit on the brown rocks by
the shore.

I see the glow worms under
the damp cliff. No whippoorwill
are heard tonight, and scarcely
a note of any other bird.

At 8 o'clock the fogs
have begun which with the low
half-moon shining on them
look like cobwebs or thin white
veils spread over the earth.
They are the dreams or visions
of the meadow.

Oct
Sept 5th 57

70 Chipp. 8 P.m. moon $\frac{3}{4}$ full.

The nights now are very still for there is hardly any noise of birds or insects. The whippoorwill is not heard nor the mosquito, only the occasional ticking of some *Panor.* But at Indian Villages you still hear the barking of dogs instead of the howl of wolves.

The moon gives out a creamy but white cold light, through which you can see far distinctly.

The sand slopes on the deep cut gleam coldly as if covered with rime when I descend into the valley by Wheeler's grainfield, I find it quite cold.

As I go through the spring woods I perceive a sweet dry scent from the underwoods like that of the fragrant life ever lasting. I suppose it is that.

To appreciate the moonlight, you must stand in the shade & see where a few rocks or a few feet distant it falls in between the trees. It is a "milder day" made for some inhabitants whom you do not

see. The pines are a quiet gentle
poor wretched plainly & inhabit the
moonlight. As moonlight is to sun-
light so are the pines & men.

I frequently see a light on
the ground within thick & dark
woods when all around is in shadow
& have forward expecting to find some
decayed & phosphorescent stump, but
find it to be some clear moonlight
that falls in between through some
crack between the leaves. Though
I cannot readily tell which to refer
it to.

Standing on the Cliffs, no sound
comes up from the woods. The earth
has gradually turned more north-
ward. The birds have fled south
after the sun, and this impresses
me as well by day as by night
as a deserted country.

There is a down-like mist on
the river & pond, and consequently
there are no bright reflections of
the moon or shimmering of her light
on the surface of the pond, all the
light being absorbed by the low fog.

Oct 6th 51

To F. N. Pond 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ Pm - by boat, the moon
4/5 full but a cloud in the sky - padding
all the way.

The air is almost still - the water per-
fectly so, gleaming like oil in the moon-
light with the moon's disk reflected
in it.

When we started we saw some
fishermen kindling their fire for
opening by the river side. It was
a lurid reddish blaze contrasting
with the white light of the moon,
with dense volumes of black smoke
from the burning pitch pine roots,
rolling upwards in the form of
an inverted pyramid. The blaze
reflected on the water was almost
as distinct as the substance. It
looked like tarring a ship on
the shore of the shore of the light
or Coccytus; for it is still and
dark notwithstanding the
moon & there is no sound but
the crackling of the pine. The
fishermen can be seen only near
at hand, though their fire is
visible far away, and when we were

they appear as dusky fuliginous
figures, half enveloped in smoke,
seen only by their enlightened sides,
and lost in their old coats & the
fog from the pipe & fire, they
look like devils - One standing
up forward holding the spear
ready to dash it while the smoke
& flames are blown in his face
the other paddling the boat slowly
& silently along close to the shore
with almost imperceptible motion.

The river appears in-
definitely wide. There is a mist
rising from the water which increases
the indistinctness, ^{and it appears to be bounded only by} a high bank or moun-
tain with river & a distance over the
meadow, with its sandy gutters &
clans there exposed when the Indians
peared.

Now the fisherman's fire left
behind acquires some thick rays in
the distance and becomes a star,
as much as the sun light falling
through an irregular chink makes
a round figure on the opposite
wall - so this place at a distance
appears a star. Such effect has
the atmosphere -

I remember that time when some
15 years ago when I was a steam
man myself - I was out fishing
with my brother with a horse made
spear of board nails, & a crate
made of an old tin pan with holes
punched in the bottom to hold our fire.
It was a dark & still night - very
flat for our purposes - and we had
just fairly commenced operations &
speared a few fish - when suddenly
the imperfect parting of ^{the} ~~our~~
crate was burnt away & down
it plunged with all its fiery contents
& a ^{where I depended to rest, and this the next summer} ~~sizzling~~ ^{spurred} to the bottom
The men ~~was~~ ^{leaving} us astonished
in total darkness - But we improved
the opportunity to play a trick on some
of the heavens above by which we saw
we stole up the stream with ruffled
paddles with us by direct opposite
to them only 40 or 5 rods distant - and
watched all ^{as revealed by this fire} their motions & the
expression of their faces, while
they were intently engaged in spearing.
They were to the ^{whom we thus had, at advantage} ~~the~~ ^{acquaintance}
& neighbors - but did not dream of the
rough hood of the mortal -
When it had rated our game we
suddenly started away with regular
& rattling sweeps of the oars.

Having them a tomb and
passing out into the dark.

At the time some
boats with ~~had~~ ~~knicker~~ their
fire on the opposite side of the river
were fishing down one side of the
river while we held the other. But
with parties new that below a certain
bridge which we were approaching
only one side was available for
fishing, and we soon learned
of the sound of their oars that
they were bent on getting the
start of us. Then commenced
a race in the good earnest. It
was quite dark & we could only
see each others fire & hear the
rattle of the oars. They were the
strongest party having more men
at the oars, but we were much
better acquainted with the river.
We knew that the river was higher
& that we ^{could} ~~just~~ barely go under
the bridge without striking - but
the only way that they could go
when we did. As we reached the
bridge to get the proposed to pass
between neighboring peers - while
my companion suddenly lowered

our crate - I at the oars impelled
the boat through without
losing any headway - At the
same instant our antagonist
crate struck the bridge - and of the
boat and all its blazing contents
were thrown overboard. A hearty
laugh went up from their boat
in ~~the~~ the dark - and there
was an end of their fishing ^{for} that
night.

The bright sheen of the moon
is constantly travelling with us,
and is seen at the same angle
in front on the surface of the
pads, and the reflection of its
disk in the rippled water by our
boat-side appears like bright
gold pieces on the river's counter.
The 'cain' is incessantly poured
forth as from some unseen horn
of plenty at our side.

I do not know but the
beauties of the gleaming oily
surface is enhanced by the thin
fog. A few water insects are seen
flaming in our course.

I shout like a farmer & his
oxen - a short barking shout,
and instantly the woods on the
eastern shore take it up - & then
the western with a little up the
stream, and so it appears & rebounds
from one side of the river valley
& the other, till at length I hear
a farmer call to his team as
far up as I can hear & say whether
we are bound.

^{By the} ~~When~~ We pass through ^{reaches}
where there is no fog - where perhaps
a little sun is shining. Our clothes
are almost wet through with the
mist ^{than that the lower half of my clothes thoroughly wet}
^{in such close proximity} ^{that the upper half of my clothes}
are much warmer than others.

In one instance it was warmer
in the midst of fog, than
in a clear reach.

In the middle of the
pass we tried the echo again.
1st The bird on the right took it
up - then one further up the stream
on the left, and then after a long
pause when we had almost given
it up - and the longer expected the
more in one sense unexpected & sur-

passing it was - we heard a
farmer shout to his team in
a distant valley far up on the
opposite side of the stream, and
much louder ^{more distinctly} ~~than~~ than the previous
echo - and even after this when we
had forgotten who the original farmer
was, we heard one shout faintly
in some neighboring town. But
why did the echoes always travel
up the stream? I turned about
& shouted again, and then I found
that they all appeared equally to
travel down the stream, or perhaps
I heard only those that did so.

As we rowed to the eastern
shore of the pond - a moon lit
hill covered with thick oaks,
we could form no opinion of
our progress toward it, not seeing
the line where the water met the hill -
not until we saw the weeds
and sandy shore and the tall
hill-rubies rising above the shallow
water like the masts of large
vessels in a haven.

The moon was so high that
the angle of incidence did not permit
of our seeing her reflection in the pond.

As we paddled down the stream
with our backs to the moon, we
saw the reflection of every word
& with on both sides distinctly.
These reflections answering per-
fectly to the real object impress the
voyagers with a sense of symme-
try, as when you fold a flatted
paper & produce a regular figure
to the shore, had been folded &
doubled. What you commonly
call 'but & half'.

When the shore is 'very low, the
actual and reflected trees appear
to stand foot to foot, and it is but
a line that separates them, and
the water & the sky almost flow
into one another - & the shore seems
to float.

As we paddle up & down we see
the cabins of mustasats faintly,
rising from amid the weeds, and
the strong odor of musk is borne
over from particular parts of the
shore. Also the odor of a skunk
is wafted from over the meadows & fields.

The fog appears in some places
gathered into a little pyramid or
equal & itself on the surface of the
water.

The clouds of the village have lost many of their colors & their shadows ^{are not so heavy as last month.} Oct. 28 '52. 60° 24' 53" a very dark evening with a few stars & a few neighbors.

To Cuffs 8 PM The moon beginning to wane. It's quite warm but moist night. As I cross the RR I hear the telegraph hark again.

I hear no sound of a bird as I go up the back road - only a few faint cricket - these the birds we are reduced to. What a pining sound that for the great globe & make!

After whatever revolutions in my woods & experiences, when I come forth at evening, as if from years of confinement to the house, I see the few stars which make the constellation of the Lesser Bear in the same relative position - the ever-casting geometry of the stars. How incredible & he described as those bright points which appear in the blue sky as the darkness increases, said to be other worlds - like the berries on the lark when the summer is ripe. Even the ocean of birds - even the regions of the ether are studded with idols. Far in the ether is seen the Persian isle unseen by day.

And when the darkness comes, then
fires are seen from this shore,
as Columbus saw the fires of San
Salvador! ^{At 9³⁰ at looking out the window the moon & evening just after dark, I saw}
The den in the withered grass reflects
the moonlight like glow-worms.

That star which accompanies the
moon will not be her companion to-
morrow

The forest has lost so many leaves
that its floor & paths are ^{indeed comparable to the} ~~very~~ ^{light} ~~dark~~ ^{uniformly light with}
chequered with ^{fallen leaves.}

Near no sound but the rustling
of the withered leaves, which lulls the
few & silent birds to sleep - and on
the wooded hill-tops, the roar of the
wind. Each tree is a harp which
resounds all night, though some have
but a few leaves left to flutter & hum.

From the Cliffs. The river & pond
are exactly the color of the sky, though
the latter is slightly veiled with a thin
mist. The outline of the peninsula is
quite distinct. Even the distant
fields across the river are seen to
be russet by moonlight as by day.

Returning through Whelan's hill-side field toward the RR, I see

The bonny Salvadorean from - even & young men the women & long hair
black & curly & curly like the women in it of looking to a different hair
to some hair - even & with M. & others that the women a little old hair - the women a world.

The springing muck leaves more distinctly
than by day. They are remarkably
warm to my hand, compared with
the earth or a stone. I should
be glad to make my bed of them
some time.